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The Changes; or, plus ça change? Newburgh Hamilton's Early Writings and the Politics of Handel's Libretti

MIRANDA STANYON**

I. Introduction

The politics of Handel's oratorios and operas provoke heated debate, not least about how we define 'politics' in the eighteenth century and how, if at all, we separate 'Handel' from the collaborative endeavours and multiple sites of composition, patronage, business, performance, and reception that make up 'Handel's oratorios and operas'.¹ Libretti feature prominently in these debates.² Even if they reveal little (at least directly) about Handel's sensibilities, they at least seem to reveal *something*; when musical settings seem impossibly opaque, texts can appear welcomingly decipherable and explicit. Understandably so: among other things, political theorizing is generally conducted in words; words are the primary medium of scholarship; and modern musicological tools of interpretation have their origins in hermeneutic techniques developed over millennia to deal with words.

Yet interpretations of Handel's libretti and librettists are themselves fraught, whether they support claims about Handel's music, its receptions, or its contexts. A decade ago, Suzanne Aspden issued a particularly clear call for Handel scholars to recognise the malleability and contingency of interpretation itself, among eighteenth-century

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¹ See Reinhard Strohm, 'Handel and his Italian Opera Texts', *Essays on Handel & Italian Opera* (Cambridge, 1985), 34–79; Curtis Price, 'English Traditions in Handel's *Rinaldo*', *Handel Tercentenary Collection*, ed. Stanley Sadie and Anthony Hicks (London, 1987), 120–135; William Webber, 'Handel's London', in *Cambridge Companion to Handel*, ed. Donald Burrows (Cambridge, 1997), 45–54; Edward Corp, 'Music at the Stuart Court at Urbino. 1717–18', *Music & Letters* 81.3 (2000), 351–63; David Hunter, 'Handel among the Jacobites', *Music & Letters* 82.4 (2001), 543–56; Ellen Harris, *Handel as Orpheus: Voice and Desire in the Chamber Cantatas* (Cambridge MA, 2001); Strohm, 'Darstellung, Aktion und Interesse in der höfischen Opernkunst', *Händel Jahrbuch* 49 (2003), 13–26; Harris, 'With Eyes on the East and Ears in the West: Handel's Orientalist Operas', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 36.3 (2006), 419–443; Paul Monod, 'The Politics of Handel's Early London Operas, 1711–1718', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 36.3 (2006), 445–472; James Winn, 'Style and Politics in the Philips-Handel Ode for Queen Anne's Birthday, 1713', *Music & Letters* 89.4 (2008), 547–561; Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy, 1719–1766* (Cambridge, 2011), 87–92; Thomas McGeary, *The Politics of Opera in Handel's Britain* (Cambridge, 2013).

² Some studies almost exclusively treat libretti, like Deborah Rooke, *Handel's Israelite Oratorio Libretti: Sacred Drama and Biblical Exegesis* (Oxford, 2012); Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge, 1995). Others focus strongly on text, suggesting, for example, that '[m]usicologists have looked in vain for' 'musical clue[s]' to interpretation. Suzanne Aspden, 'Ariadne's Clew: Politics, Allegory, and Opera in London (1734)', *Musical Quarterly*, 85.4 (2001), 735–70 at 746.

listeners as well as musicologists. She suggested that operatical exegetes should welcome the discovery that even ‘ostensibly straightforward’ material ‘becomes not more but less easy to read, the more deeply we delve into the labyrinths of history and allegory.’³ Such suggestions have received mixed responses. Thomas McGeary has recently dismissed a broad swathe of allegorizing approaches to Handel’s operas, arguing that topical and party-political meanings inhered primarily in extra-musical sources, which appropriated the operas and turned them to political ends (especially in squibs and journalism), rather than in the actions of partisan producers and performers, or in allegories constructed within libretti and reconstructed centuries later.⁴ But some may hesitate over McGeary’s distinctions between partisanship and broader political ideologies, or between ‘extrinsic’ politicisations of music and apparently intrinsic or intended meanings.⁵ In more heated debate surrounding the ‘anti-Judaic message’ of Handel’s *Messiah*, Michael Marissen has been accused of allowing slippage between the possible intentions of Handel, his Nonjuring librettist Charles Jennens, and anti-Jewish sources Jennens used in compiling *Messiah*.⁶ Yet even casting Handel as relatively indifferent to his librettists’ possible theological-political investments leaves open the question of how individual texts and writers contribute to the composite compositions that go by the name of ‘Handel’s works’.

This article grapples with this question in the course of exploring the early writings of one of Handel’s lesser-known librettists, Newburgh Hamilton. It describes what seems to be the first publication attributable to Hamilton, *The Changes* (1711), sets it in the context of other early publications and biographical details, and conducts a thought experiment of reading two Handel libretti alongside *Changes*. The early writings are approached less as contexts for the oratorios than texts with their own interest, and intertexts to be set in dialogue with later productions. This approach follows current literary understandings of interpretation as a process of exploration, unfolding, playing-out or performance, and related cultural-historical understandings of political meanings as on one hand implicit in cultural objects—whether or not these

³ Ibid., 753; compare Smith, *Handel’s Oratorios*, 187.

⁴ McGeary, *Politics of Opera*, 5–6.

⁵ See, for example, Ruth Smith’s review of McGeary in *Eighteenth Century Music*, 11.2 (2014), 294–9.

⁶ Marissen, *Tainted Glory in Handel’s Messiah* (New Haven, 2014), 3. Compare John Roberts, ‘False Messiah’, *JAMS* 63.1 (2010), 45–97.

meanings were intended and perceived—and on the other hand as unpredictable, performed, and contingent as they relate to individual agents.⁷

Hamilton's collaborations with Handel were shaped by his position in a particular Tory-oriented network, and traces of the writer's early connections with High Church, pre-Revolution, and sometimes Jacobitical tastes, patrons and causes can plausibly be seen in his later texts for Handel. This argument supports the growing understanding of Handel's music as embedded in contemporary political-religious cultures. Recognising the complexity of these cultures and Handel's mobility within them does not entail that politics and music occupied separate 'domains'; the fruits of Handel's collaborations with librettists like Hamilton were not *determined* by 'party affiliations', yet neither did they 'transcend[]' politics.⁸

II. Hamilton, Sacheverell, and *The Changes*

We know comparatively little about Newburgh Hamilton, an admirer and friend of Handel who arranged the text for *Alexander's Feast* (1736), *Samson* (1743), the *Occasional Oratorio* (1746), and possibly *Semele* (1744). From at least 1725–1754, Hamilton served as steward to the Earl of Strafford and his family, and their papers contain much of the scarce information we possess about his working life and enthusiasm for Handel.⁹ Hamilton's origins have seemed uncertain. Musicologists generally describe him as flourishing from 1712, when his first piece opened at Drury Lane. As regards his political affiliations, the consensus is that while '[t]he political identities of Hamilton's patrons and dedicatees are markedly oppositionist,' 'Hamilton's politics are not known' directly.¹⁰

⁷ See, for example, Steven Connor, 'Spelling Things Out', *New Literary History*, 45 (2014), 183–97; Peter Burke, 'Performing History: The Importance of Occasions', *Rethinking History*, 9.1 (2005), 35–52; Jules Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven, 2002), 220; Lawrence Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *Historical Journal*, 45.4 (2002), 869–98 at 873.

⁸ Compare Hunter, 'Handel among the Jacobites', 551; Winn, 'Style and Politics', 548.

⁹ See Ruth Loewenthal, 'Handel and Newburgh Hamilton: New References in the Strafford Papers', *Musical Times* 112 (1971), 1063–6; Winton Dean and Ruth Smith, 'Hamilton, Newburgh', *Grove Music Online* (<www.oxfordmusiconline.com>), accessed 11 February 2015; Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 192; Thomas McGeary, 'Handel and the Feuding Royals', *Handel Institute Newsletter* 17.2 (2006), 5–8.

¹⁰ Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 192; Dean and Smith, 'Hamilton, Newburgh.'

Significant additional light is cast on Hamilton's background by a nineteenth-century genealogical study by Everard Hamilton.¹¹ Hamilton traced his family's 1616 settlement in Ireland under James I, and its relationship to other branches of the Hamilton clan in Ireland and Scotland.¹² According to his study, Newburgh was born in 1691/2, the third son of Patrick Hamilton of Killeter, County Tyrone, a trained attorney. In 1708 he matriculated at Trinity College Dublin, aged sixteen.¹³ Newburgh left without a degree, unlike two older brothers who became clergymen (like many in the extended family). His younger brother Charles had a successful military career and, after his retirement to Twickenham, had friendly contact with Newburgh and the Strafford circle. Charles was Newburgh's inheritor after his death in 1761.¹⁴

Little can be said definitively about the family's politics, let alone whether Newburgh shared them. Trinity and the clergy it trained generally professed allegiance to William III.¹⁵ Trinity students were, however, sometimes associated with Jacobite-leaning dissent.¹⁶ Perhaps the strongest impression of Newburgh's origins created by Everard Hamilton is of a loyal plantation family, bastions of the Anglo-Scottish establishment in Ireland, and especially the Church, with Stuart loyalties that were tested by the turmoil of the seventeenth century. Newburgh's maternal grandfather, Arthur Newburgh, was an MP during the Protectorate, but also held office after the Restoration.¹⁷ Newburgh's paternal ancestor William Hamilton of Ballyfatten died imprisoned by Catholic 'rebels' during the confederate wars.¹⁸ One branch of his descendants produced distinguished Royalist soldiers who were granted lands

¹¹ Hamilton, *Hamilton Memoirs*, 2nd edn ([1891] Dundalk, 1920), 24–5 (on Newburgh). My thanks to the reviewer who drew my attention to this source, which is also mentioned by John Andrews, *The Historical Context of Handel's 'Semele'* (PhD thesis, Cambridge, 2007), 140.

¹² Some theatre historians had assumed Hamilton to be Scottish-born. Terence Tobin, *Plays by Scots 1660–1800* (Iowa City, 1974), 123–6; Adrienne Scullion, 'The Eighteenth Century', in *A History of Scottish Theatre*, ed. Bill Findlay, (Edinburgh, 1998), 80–136 at 81–5.

¹³ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 18, 24–5; George Dames Burtchaell and Thomas Ulick Sadleir (eds), *Alumni Dublinenses: A Register of the Students, Graduates, Professors and Provosts of Trinity College in the University of Dublin (1593–1860)* (rev. edn, Dublin, 1935), 364.

¹⁴ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 24.

¹⁵ What this says about familial and personal affiliations is more elusive. J.I. McGuire judges that non-juring was a political 'luxury' that '[t]he besieged protestant colony could not afford' in early eighteenth-century Ireland. McGuire, 'The Church of Ireland and the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688,' *Studies in Irish History Presented to R. Dudley Edwards*, ed. Art Cosgrove and Donal McCartney (Dublin, 1979), 137–49 at 49.

¹⁶ Three of Newburgh's contemporaries, for instance, defaced a statue of William III in 1710, an act harshly punished and linked with pro-Sacheverell and Nonjuring positions in the press. See J.T. Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin* (Dublin, 1859), iii.42–5; Robert Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper 1685–1760* (London, 1967), 120–1.

¹⁷ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 17.

¹⁸ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 4.

comprising the Caledon estate at the Restoration.¹⁹ In 1698, John Hamilton of Caledon was attainted for disloyalty to James II (rightly or wrongly); but his heir, Margaret, married the fifth Earl of Orrery and Cork, son of a notorious Jacobite plotter and himself a prominent Jacobite and Tory figure.²⁰ Newburgh's cousin William of Ballyfatten, too, was attainted by James II, although later he may have been suspected of Jacobitism.²¹

A richer source for Newburgh's own politico-religious life is the little-studied document at the centre of this article, *The Changes: Or, Faction Vanquish'd. A Poem. Most humbly Inscrib'd to those Noble Patriots, Defenders of their Country, and Supporters of the Crown, the Not Guilty Lords* (London: Printed and sold by John Morphew, 1711). Most extant copies of the poem are anonymous, but a variant title page, preserved at the New York Public Library, names the author as 'their lordships most devoted and most obedient servant, Newburgh Hamilton'. The attribution appears in some literary reference works, and has been noted briefly by Ilias Chrissochoidis and John Andrews; other scholars, perhaps wary of doubtful identifications, have passed over it.²²

Written in the aftermath of the notorious Sacheverell trial and the subsequent fall of the Whig's 'curs'd Cabal' from government, *Changes* is a Tory panegyric and a warning against letting Whigs regain sway.²³ This satirical-panegyric poem aligns itself with Sacheverell's supporters—Tories, High Churchmen, Nonjurors, and real or suspected Jacobites—without, however, making explicit pronouncements on the constitutional controversy at the trial's heart.

¹⁹ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 5–6.

²⁰ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 8–11; Lawrence Smith, 'Boyle, John, fifth earl of Cork and fifth earl of Orrery', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<www.oxforddnb.com>), accessed 11 February 2015 (henceforth *DNB*). Everard Hamilton does not mention Orrery's politics, and may play down other Jacobitical strands in the family's history.

²¹ See Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 6, 12–13. Hamilton reports that the family applied to reclaim lands confiscated under William III. Confiscations essentially targeted Jacobites, yet both confiscations and claims are notoriously complex. See J.G. Simms, *The Williamite Confiscation in Ireland* (London, 1956). A William Hamilton made a claim by descent on lands in Tyrone held by Lord Abercorne; this Hamilton may have been caught up in rapid redistributions involving the fourth Jacobite and fifth Williamite earls of Abercorne. See *A List of the Claims as the are Entred with the Trustees...* (Dublin, 1701), 348, entry 3030.

²² David Foxon, *English Verse 1701–50: A Catalogue of Separately Printed Poems with Notes on Contemporary Collected Editions* (Cambridge, 1975), i.323; English Short Title Catalogue (<estc.bl.uk>), accessed 15 February 2015; Chrissochoidis, "'True Merit Always Envy Rais'd': The Advice to Mr. Handel (1739) and Israel in Egypt's Early Reception", *Musical Times*, 150.1906 (2009), 69–86 at 84; Andrews, *Historical Context*, 142–4. There are six known copies with the anonymous title page. No entry for the poem exists in the Stationers' Register.

²³ *Changes*, 4, line 34. Henceforth cited in the text by line number.

Henry Sacheverell was a High Church cleric impeached by parliament in 1710 following a sermon in which he painted the ruling Whigs as secret enemies of the Church, and dissented from the sanctioned understanding of the Glorious Revolution as an instance of lawful resistance to threatened tyranny under the Catholic James II.²⁴ *Changes* praises the ‘Not Guilty Lords’: the minority who voted to acquit Sacheverell, and also, the poem implies, the only Lords themselves not guilty of treasonous faction-mongering. Although Sacheverell was convicted, the Queen supported an extremely lenient sentence. Soon afterwards, the Whigs fell from power in a landslide election in October 1710, and Anne restocked her ministry with Tories—the ‘Change’ celebrated ‘with joyful loud Applause’ in the poem (322). Yet this change by no means settled matters. The trial had shown just how difficult it was for Whigs to define the proper limits of resistance (why should the nation not resist Anne if the mood suited?), or, conversely, for Tories to safely resist Whig interpretations of lawful resistance in 1688. For, as the Earl of Wharton reportedly put it, ‘if the revolution was not lawful, many in that house [...] were guilty of blood, murder, rapine, and injustice; and [...] the queen herself was no lawful sovereign’.²⁵

The Sacheverell affair touched on a core unresolved problem for the British polity after 1688, generating a deluge of polemical poetry and prose, and acting as reference point in the coming years. Some satires in this period contain ambitious political analysis, are investigative or exploratory, and present detailed arguments to persuade the undecided or reform the erring; writers could stake a claim to develop political ideas or influence an emergent public sphere.²⁶ This cannot be said of *Changes*. Rather, it might be said to follow rhetorical conventions already established in early Stuart England, whereby, ‘under a monarchy the orator, the master of persuasive, “deliberative” rhetoric’ ‘become[s] a courtier and use[s] the “demonstrative” rhetoric of praise and blame’.²⁷ In keeping with this non-democratic ethos, the change

²⁴ The sermon, printed as *The Perils of False Brethren* (London, 1709), was preached at St Paul’s in 1709. See Geoffrey Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London, 1973); F.F. Madan and W.A. Speck (eds), *A Critical Bibliography of Dr. Henry Sacheverell* (Lawrence, KA, 1978); Mark Knights (ed.), *Faction Displayed: Reconsidering the Impeachment of Dr Henry Sacheverell* (Parliamentary History Special Issue, 31.1; Chichester, 2012); Brian Cowan (ed.), *The State Trial of Doctor Henry Sacheverell* (Parliamentary History Special Issue, 31, Supplement 1; Chichester, 2012).

²⁵ See Tobias Smollett, *A Complete History of England* (2nd edn, London, 1758–60), x.37.

²⁶ See Ashley Marshall, *The Practice of Satire in England, 1658–1770* (Baltimore, 2013), 158–68; Mark Knights, ‘Introduction: The View from 1710’, in *Faction Displayed*, 1–15.

²⁷ David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (rev. edn, Oxford, 2002), 70; David Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2005), 249–50.

celebrated in the poem is portrayed as relying not on votes in the recent election, but on the divinely-ordained monarch's choice of a new 'Senate' (ministry), filled with heroically virtuous and noble patriots (73).

Printed six months after Sacheverell's trial, *Changes* works partly by making a bid for and praising values claimed by Tories and Whigs alike: patriotism, enmity to faction, loyalty to the crown, disinterest, bravery, love of harmony. Even its charges against Whiggery remain relatively commonplace. Whigs usurp royal power (they 'sat upon | The Regal Throne' (54–5)). They subvert monarchic constitution (the 'Fury' 'Faction' gloatingly predicts the return of 'Commonwealth' and 'Confusion' with Whig domination (91, 112, 13–40)). They preach 'Cant' about the sanctity of laws protecting 'Church and State,' while in fact using their 'boast[ed]' focus on legislation to rewrite the rule books ('Those Laws that were not for them, they did break, | [...] The old were burnt, that they might better make' (175, 190–1, 194–6)). The poem's depiction of Sacheverell avoids the pointy end of political analysis and mirrors popular Tory portrayals of Sacheverell as an apolitical martyr, a simple 'holy Priest' who diagnosed the nation's 'Wounds' and 'rous[ed]' it 't'avoid th'approaching Storm' (223–4, 234, 236). A nuanced or closely-reasoned interpretation of 'Party' is not at issue here, let alone a testing out of concepts of resistance.

Rather than offering self-consciously theoretical analysis, *Changes* has a narrative and epideictic logic that connects praise for Sacheverell and his supporters (stanzas 1–23), first, with the new Tory-dominated government led by Robert Harley (stanzas 24–9), second, and implicitly, with a key issue before this government—ending the war with Spain and France—and finally with a spectacular recent event: Harley's triumphant return to Parliament in late April 1711 after being stabbed by a French spy, Antoine de Guiscard (stanzas 30–7). The poem frames these phenomena within ongoing cosmic strife between (Tory) virtue and (Whig) faction, the latter recalling Milton's council of devils, and like them finally left 'Rending Hell's gloomy Shades with screams and howls' (494). This framework allows Harley's stabbing to act as a reminder, not of Papist perfidy and the need to hold out against France in peace negotiations (as many Whigs wanted), but the need to 'Keep' the Whigs 'in Awe': 'Let them not rise again, but press them down, | Lest they attempt once more t' insult the Crown' (511–13).

Ironically, Harley himself tried to create a more moderate bipartisan government and maintain personal links with Whigs.²⁸ By his lights, *Changes*' extreme anti-Whiggery might seem to promote faction. Indeed, superficially, the poem's demonization of Whiggery resembles the position of an *anti*-Harleyite group of Tories, the October Club, associated in the popular imagination with Sacheverell, and intent on purging Whigs from parliament.²⁹ Ignoring the Club, *Changes* presents an alternative narrative connecting High Church causes, anti-Whiggery, and Harley, in effect showing patriotic Britons can abominate Whigs while supporting the current ministry.

This position intersects strongly with that of the Tory paper *The Examiner*, penned by Jonathan Swift and Delarivier Manley. On 17 May 1711, *Examiner* reminded its readers that the paper was 'first undertaken' to 'shew the Necessity [...] of changing the Ministry, that our Constitution in Church and State might be preserv'd; to expose some dangerous Principles and Practices under the former Administration, and prove [...] that those who are now at the Helm, are entirely in the true Interest of Prince and People.'³⁰ The same issue inveighed against Whiggish misrepresentations of Harley—and it advertised the publication of *Changes*, alongside a tract authored by Manley with Swift, *A True Narrative*, recounting De Guiscard's attack (London: Printed for J. Morphew, 1711). Connecting *Changes*, *Examiner*, and *A True Narrative* was their printer, John Morphew, who had been arrested by the Whigs in 1709, helped produce the first Tory account of Sacheverell's trial, and became a chief printer for the Tory ministry.³¹

While *Examiner* criticised others' accounts of Harley, Swift himself had made an initial 'Blunder' in representing the attack in his paper, and was accused of diminishing Harley's heroism and giving a windfall to his rivals. From a Harleyite perspective, Manley's *True Narrative* was a more accurate account, with a politic

²⁸ W.A. Speck, 'Harley, Robert, first earl of Oxford and Mortimer', *DNB*. It is not the case that *Changes* expresses 'a definite preference for moderate, coalition government' (Andrews, *Historical Context*, 144).

²⁹ On the connection with Sacheverell, see *A Collection of Hymns and Poems, for the Use of the October Club...* (London, 1711).

³⁰ *Examiner*, no. 42 (London, 10–17 May 1711). 'Mr. Examiner' was still advocating two years later that faction be abolished by destroying the Whigs (vol. 4, no. 36 (London, 2–9 October 1713)).

³¹ On Morphew's politics, see, for example, Michael Treadwell, 'On False and Misleading Imprints in the London Book Trade 1660–1750', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds), *Fakes and Frauds: Varieties of Deception in Print and Manuscript* (Winchester, 1989), 29–46 at 34–5; Maximillian Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford, 2001), 358. On Sacheverell and Morphew, see Cowan, 'Introduction: Reading the Trial of Dr Sacheverell', in *The State Trial of Doctor Henry Sacheverell*, 1–34 at 17–9, though Cowan curiously suggests Morphew had no strong party allegiances.

emphasis on moderation and toleration, and a careful avoidance of Whig-bashing that chimed with Harley's *modus operandi*.³² These emphases are, of course, antipathetic to *Changes*. Its linking of current events with Sacheverell also deviated from the wary distance Swift and Manley's texts generally maintained from the firebrand cleric. We might imagine the printer and bookseller Morphew strategically catering to a range of political supporters and customers by presenting this range of pro-ministry perspectives on Harley's stabbing, much as Daniel Defoe in the same period produced multiple publications on a single issue, pointing the same moral, but apparently speaking from different perspectives.³³

But the title page bearing Hamilton's name encourages us to think further about the work undertaken by the poem, beyond any usefulness for other Tory writers. The variant title page could indicate a printer's mistake or writer's last-minute change of heart about anonymity—a practice which, broadly construed, 'was at least as much a norm as signed authorship' in the period, especially with potentially controversial or embarrassing efforts like a youthful author's political satire.³⁴ Alternatively, Hamilton may have intended for a small group of prints to circulate under his name, perhaps as gifts to potential patrons or reliable political connections.³⁵ Certainly, the poem seems designed to impress. Its substantial length (522 lines), literary allusions and self-referential moments, and its ambitious formal scheme—an 'Introduction' and 'Conclusion' in heroic triplets flanking forty verses in an original, intricate, and exacting stanzaic pattern—set it apart from the vast majority of contemporary topical poems.

Some formal comparisons are instructive. A close relation of *Changes* in the field of praise, *Britannia: A Poem. With all Humility Inscrib'd to the Fifty Two (Not Guilty) Lords* (London: Morphew, 1710), is shorter, and uses what we might call the unmarked form for long poems in the period: rhyming couplets in iambic pentameter.

³² Ruth Herman, *The Business of a Woman: The Political Writings of Delarivier Manley* (Newark, 2003), 152–65.

³³ Novak, *Defoe*, 125.

³⁴ Robert Griffin, 'Anonymity and Authorship', *New Literary History*, 30.4 (1999), 877–95 at 882. Compare Lee Erickson, "'Unboastful Bard": Originally Anonymous English Romantic Poetry Book Publication, 1770–1835', *New Literary History* 33.2 (2002). As Foxon notes (*English Verse*, i.323), there is no sign of a cancel. The distribution of type on the anonymous title page seems identical to that on the NYPL copy, barring the text with the attribution and necessary respacing.

³⁵ My thanks to Gavin Alexander for this suggestion. For one example of a minuscule print run for a 'coterie' audience, see Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth, 1725–1742* (Oxford, 1994), 186.

The same unambitious form appears in *Changes*' close relation in the field of blame, the popular satire *Faction Display'd* (1704; London: H. Hills, 1709). It shares *Changes*' targets of Whiggery, cabals, moderation, and republicanism (though *Faction* is more analytical, more open in its support for Stuarts and Laudians, and more specific about the crimes of particular Whigs). Like *Changes*, it personifies Faction as a female fiend, borrows its structure from Milton's council of demons, and makes a bid for a noble, high style of ruthless satire through (among other things) appeals to the muses, high-literary references, and its imposing length (526 lines).³⁶ There is nothing formally comparable to *Changes* in the Tory *Collection of Poems, for and against Dr. Sacheverell* (London, 1710), or *A Tory Pill, to Purge Whig Melancholy* (London, 1715). Of the seventy-six poems from 1704–1714 reproduced in *Poems on Affairs of State*, only two are longer than *Changes*.³⁷ Those poems not in rhyming couplets in this collection almost all use, and parody, recognisable song forms—hymns, ballads, tale-rhyme stanzas. One notable exception, Defoe's *The Vision* (1706), again uses form parodically, to suggest an antiquated, superstitious, 'foreign' (Scottish) speaker who pays more attention to sound than sense.³⁸

Changes' mode is not ironic. Its intricate lyric form arguably contributes to its claim to cultural capital of a particular kind, helping to write the poem into a literary heritage of courtly praise and ingenuity reminiscent of Cavalier poetry and some Pindaric odes. *Changes*' formal distinctiveness and complexity certainly suggest the author's aesthetic, professional or ideological investment in the piece. It reads like a poem with something to prove for its poet, a poem its author might be sorry to see completely unacknowledged. This investment suggests the poem's role in its author's political and literary self-fashioning.

Changes aligns its author unequivocally with the High Church Tory cause and commits him to one vision of 'Toryism' at a moment when its fortunes seemed to have turned. This socio-cultural vision encompassed more than high political theory. As Mark Knights observes, Sacheverell 'questioned the whole culture ushered in by

³⁶ See also the verbal echo of *Faction Display'd*, lines 176–7, in *Changes*, 197–99. Personifying faction as a female fiend may have been a relatively new device, and was also used by Swift and Manley around this time. Herman, *Business of a Woman*, 51–2.

³⁷ The remainder are significantly shorter. See Defoe's *Dyet of Poland* (1705, 1326 lines) and his *Scots Poem* (1707, 1125 lines), in Frank Ellis (ed.), *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660–1714*, Vol. 7: 1704–1714 (New Haven, 1975), 72–132, 233–282.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 208–220.

the revolution, a shift, as he saw it, towards atheism, irreligion, republicanism, hypocrisy and self-advancement veiled by a dangerous veneer of worldly “moderation” that his own zeal and passion was intended to challenge.³⁹ The poetic mode of *Changes* participates in such a challenge to post-revolution culture, meting out praise to ‘The Godlike Acts of *British* Heroes’ and violent retribution to ‘vile Traitors’ (the poet’s pen should ‘force’ the ‘sharpest Sting’ through traitors until they ‘wish for Death’ (20–1, 36)).

What might strike modern readers as crude hyperbole belongs at least in part to an emulation of elite pre-revolution literary culture, where aristocratic virtues like heroism are significant political desiderata, and savage satires are presented, as in *Changes*, as serving ‘sacred truth’ and ‘publick Zeal’ (55, 321). The preface to *Faction Display’d* explained the political charge attaching to this high and vituperative style: ‘Sincerity’, ‘Truth and Nakedness’ belong to Juvenalian satire and the Tory poet; moderate ‘delight,’ flattery, ‘Fiction and Embellishment’ to ‘the *Whig-Writers*’.⁴⁰ It seems fitting or at least suggestive that the Hamilton’s family motto, *sola nobilitas virtus* (virtue alone ennobles), was adapted from a Juvenal satire.⁴¹

The author of *Changes* has no taste for highly-prized ‘modern’ literary values like indirection and moderate debate—at that time associated with dissent and Whiggery—or for separating politics, divine inspiration, and poetry. These domains merge in an aesthetic that recalls aspects of the late-seventeenth-century interest in the sublime, with its emphasis on autocratic powers and desires, and the sublime orator’s ‘pleasing rape upon the very Soul of the Reader.’⁴² Poetic persuasion in *Changes* takes pleasing liberties with its readers; it is forceful, even violent, yet metaphysically and rhetorically lofty:

[...] bright, perswasive Eloquence shou’d shine,
Her forcing, graceful Charms adorn each Line,
With smoothest Words, and Notions all Divine. (46–8)

³⁹ Knights, ‘Introduction’, 5. On moderation and debate as Whiggish values, see further Nicholas Phillipson, ‘Politics and Politeness in the Reigns of Anne and the Early Hanoverians’, in *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500–1800*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock, et al. (Cambridge, 1993), 211–45 at 217–27.

⁴⁰ *Faction Display’d*, ‘To the Reader’ (unnumbered, p.2).

⁴¹ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, frontispiece; compare Juvenal, book iii satire viii.20.

⁴² John Dennis, *The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry* (London, 1704), 79. On satire and seventeenth-century sublimity, see Andrew Stauffer, *Anger, Revolution, and Romanticism* (Cambridge, 2005), 26–7.

Nor should *Changes* be subjected too quickly to modern assumptions about political hack writing, although such ideas were formed and debated in Hamilton's lifetime.⁴³ *Changes* does read like a poem suing for patronage. Yet while it decries self-interest in 'hired Scriblers' (37), it nonetheless suggests that its author is a willing and *morally-upright* pen for party. The poem envisions its reception in a world where the powerful legitimately patronise 'humble servant[s],' including poets who share their political views.

This world was rapidly changing, as print markets made poets less dependent on individual patrons, as ideas about the ethics of patronage and professionalism shifted, and as newspapers outstripped topical poetry as a dominant mode of news- and opinion-making. Most importantly for *Changes*, the political landscape and rules of engagement with poetry were changing. Early in the century, writing verse was 'a means of achieving recognition and appointment or a party position.'⁴⁴ Young hopefuls might make their mark in poetry and then become 'gentlemen amateurs', occasionally writing poetry while they began careers in public service opened up by authorship.⁴⁵ *Changes*' author may have desired a similar trajectory, and have taken steps in this direction. But for Tories, the role of public poet in public service was largely closed after 1714, when George I's accession ushered in four decades of Tory exclusion from power.

Identifying the author of *Changes* with Handel's Hamilton seems uncontroversial, especially in the context of changing writerly careers and changing political culture over the eighteenth century. *Changes*' High Church Tory position is not incongruent with Hamilton's background as an educated young man who for some reason did not complete his studies; whose family was enmeshed with the established Church and had reason to support centralist visions of hereditary monarchy (Stuart or otherwise); and who arrived in London sometime in the 1710s without independent means. *Changes* also chimes, as we will see, with Hamilton's known patrons, employers and dedicatees. His other early writings seemingly have an anti-Whig colouring, and his Handel libretti can be read as sharing a number of their literary-political sensibilities and values.

⁴³ See Brean Hammond, *Professional Imaginative Writing in England, 1670–1740: 'Hackney for Bread'* (Oxford, 1997).

⁴⁴ Paula Backscheider, *Daniel Defoe: Ambition and Innovation* (Lexington, 1986), 15.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

III. Hamilton's 'Friends' and other Early Writings

When Hamilton called Handel 'my Friend' in the preface to the word-book of *Alexander's Feast*, he suggested an affective tie and even a degree of equality which sits well with images of Handel's life as one shaped by sociability and friendship in the modern sense.⁴⁶ But 'friends' in Hamilton's lifetime covered wider territory, 'spann[ing] kinship ties, sentimental relationships, economic ties, occupational connections, intellectual and spiritual attachments, sociable networks, and political alliances.'⁴⁷ Considering Hamilton's known writings before his collaborations with Handel helps understand not only his literary self-fashioning but also his 'friendships' in this extended sense, involving political affiliation, family, and money.

The cultural-political associations of Hamilton's employers and patrons could be extreme. Hamilton's St Cecilia's Day ode, *The Power of Musick* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1720), was dedicated to 'Peregrine, Marquis of Carmarthen, Baron of Kiveton' (Peregrine Hyde Osborne, 1691–1731), a Yorkshire nobleman and heir to the Second Duke of Leeds (c.1659—1729), one of Sacheverell's prominent not-guilty lords.⁴⁸ In 1712, Peregrine Hyde Osborne had married the youngest daughter of Robert Harley, the politician eulogised in *Changes*; around 1711–12 the Harleys were also close to Hamilton's long-term employer, Wentworth.⁴⁹ The dedication's reference to Hamilton as Osborne's 'obliged' servant may indicate a patronage relationship through this sprawling and intricate network. Handel himself forms another conceivable link between Hamilton and his dedicatee: Osborne and his brother Danby had travelled through Northern Germany in 1709–11, learning from music masters, buying scores, and attending concerts under the watchful eye of a governor who also kept their father abreast of developments in the War of the Spanish Succession. Danby died overseas, and Osborne returned to England with one of his music manuscripts, now regarded as 'an important source of music from Handel's

⁴⁶ See especially Ellen Harris, *George Frideric Handel: A Life with Friends* (Norton, 2014); Loewenthal, 'Handel and Newburgh Hamilton'; and the explorations of friendship and feeling in Harris, *Handel as Orpheus*.

⁴⁷ Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge, 2001), 167.

⁴⁸ See Basil Morgan, 'Osborne, Peregrine, second duke of Leeds', *DNB*.

⁴⁹ See Hannah Greig, *The beau monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford, 2013), 153.

Hamburg period'.⁵⁰ Hamilton's own interest in Handel dates from at least 1725, when he subscribed to the score of *Rodelinda*.⁵¹

Osborne's musical interests, however, do not seem to have been particularly strong, and Hamilton's competent Pindaric ode perhaps nods as much to the family's general associations with music—and libertinage—as to its particular dedicatee.⁵² Peregrine's notorious father was a talented violinist at a time when the instrument still carried associations with French-style Restoration court music, dancing, and volatile passions. He seems to have cut the figure of a latter-day Cavalier or Restoration 'rake', 'permanently impecunious'; martial, 'bold, volatile and somewhat eccentric'; and accused by his wife of 'cruel', 'inhuman usage'.⁵³ The Duke's political allegiances were febrile. As a young man he served as an MP for the court party. Like some other party members, he worked to bring William of Orange to England, yet initially voted against declaring the throne vacant before swiftly recanting. The accession of George I changed things again. He announced during the 1715 Jacobite rising that he 'had not a thought' in 1688 'that the Prince of Orange's landing would end in deposing the King', and subsequently entered into plots with Jacobites in France.⁵⁴ In 1720, he was a member of the Jacobite peerage in exile on the Continent. Hamilton's music ode has appropriately rakish accents. After unexceptionable verses recounting Orpheus's lament for Eurydice, the poem unexpectedly turns against marriage and, rather unusually, turns to directly address a character other than Cecilia. This passage mixes the provocative, sceptical tone of the Restoration stage-hero with the Anacreontic language of Dryden's Cecilian ode, *Alexander's Feast* (1697):

Fond Husband hence!——What, mourn a Wife?
That Clog to Freedom, Plague to Life;
Sing, since she's gone; new tune your Lyre,
To Notes that Joy and Mirth inspire:
[...]
Sing *Bacchus*, ever Young and Fair;

⁵⁰ Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain: A History of the Instrument and Its Music* (Oxford, 2001), 445–7.

⁵¹ In Winter 1724/5 Hamilton also subscribed to *A Pocket Companion for Gentlemen and Ladies* containing a large proportion of pieces by Handel. See Donald Burrows, et al., *George Frideric Handel: Collected Documents* (Cambridge, 2013), i.769, 686.

⁵² Spring, *Lute*, 447.

⁵³ Quoted from Morgan, 'Osborne, Peregrine.'

⁵⁴ Ibid. Compare Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 192.

[...]

Give the gay Haut-boys Breath, and join

The sprightly Accents of the Violin

In Notes becoming Liberty and Wine.⁵⁵

Later stanzas enjoin the abandoned husband to use music in seducing a ‘coy Fair One’ (73). The libertine colouring of this seduction is suggested by its level of sexual innuendo: ‘First touch the softly-breathing Flute, | Then gently press her, gentle Boy; | [...] | She yields, she feels the pleasing Smart, | And dying hugs the tickling Dart.’ (76–7, 80–1) When these lines were printed, the Marquis had recently remarried; presumably the tropes of womanizing and wife-hating were calculated to have a literary-cultural appeal and significance outweighing any indecorum in their possible application to their dedicatee.

The ode’s literary-cultural cues suggest a comparison with *Changes*, whose ‘Introduction’ cited a set of Restoration poets associated with satire and wit, and sometimes with libertinage, Jacobitism, and Catholicism:

Had I the sense of *D[ryde]n*’s flowing Brain,

The great *R[oscommo]n*’s sweet and solid Strain,

Or *W[ycherle]y*’s profound, but keenest Pen.

Had I but sprightly *D[avenan]t*’s biting Muse,

Or *E[therid]g[e]*’s [...] (13–17)⁵⁶

Changes’ non-standard stanzaic scheme also recalled Pindaric odes and other late-seventeenth-century formal experimentations: $a_5b_3a_5b_3c_5c_5d_4e_2e_2d_5/6$. (The pattern is

⁵⁵ *Power of Musick*, 49–52, 54, 56–8. Compare *Alexander’s Feast*, lines 47–60, in Edward Niles Hooker and H.T. Swedenberg Jr (eds), *The Works of John Dryden* (Berkeley, 1956–2000), vii.3–9. Hamilton’s swerve into the sceptical vein was likely inspired by burlesques on Orpheus by earlier Wits. See John Dennis, ‘The Story of Orpheus Burlesqu’d’, in *Poems in Burlesque* (London, 1692), 14–7; William King, ‘Orpheus and Euridice’, in *Some Remarks on the Tale of a Tub...* (London, 1704), 11–63.

⁵⁶ Most of these poets’ careers need not be rehearsed. ‘*D[avenan]t*’ may refer to the royalist playwright and theatre manager William Davenant or, more likely, his son Charles Davenant, a Tory writer, administrator and politician strongly attached to James II’s government, who fell from favour under William, and was later suspected of Jacobitism. Davenant was at the height of his popularity in the 1700s, following satires like *The True Picture of a Modern Whig* (1701). He helped shape debate about political obligation, the balance of powers, patriotism, and the public good in ways that resonate with *Changes*. Texts like Davenant’s *Essays* (1701) also have a strand of anti-war rhetoric that would likely appeal to Tory writers around 1711. See Julian Hoppit, ‘Davenant, Charles’, *DNB*; Steve Pincus, ‘Addison’s Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early 18th Century’, in *Faction Displayed*, 99–117 at 99–115.

not dissimilar to the first stanzas of that most widely imitated English Pindaric, *Alexander's Feast*.) Hamilton's interest in irregular forms is clear from the varied stanzas of his Pindaric music ode, which plays with odd combinations of line length and rhyme, uses rhyming triplets and quadruplets, and, like *Changes*, includes a set of quatrains composed of 2-foot rhyming couplets enclosed by longer lines. The formal play evident in Hamilton's poetry, and the engagement with Pindarics in his work for Handel, is thus congruent with the (more limited) formal experimentation of the younger author of *Changes*.

The cultural-political charge of *Changes* also resonates with Hamilton's later employers, the family of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford (1672–1739), another Yorkshire peer. In 1710–11, Wentworth was engaged in diplomacy on the Continent, and did not vote in the Sacheverell trial.⁵⁷ Nonetheless, he was undertaking negotiations to end the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14), a drawn-out and increasingly unpopular conflict promoted by the Whig government; their opposition to peace fuelled the electoral defeat of 1710. The war's end is perhaps glanced at in *Changes*' claim that Whigs destroy peace of all kinds; by its epigraphs from Cicero and Horace, which juxtapose disinterested patriotism with self-interested insurrections and war; and by its praise for Harley, then working to conclude peace treaties (and establishing the South Sea Company to benefit from the privileges treaties would secure).⁵⁸

It is uncertain how and when Hamilton entered the Wentworths' service. Firm evidence of his stewardship comes in 1725, though Ruth Smith suggests that a 1714 poem to Lady Wentworth in Hamilton's hand 'has very much the tone of affectionate respect appropriate to' a family servant.⁵⁹ The poem at the very least suggests an existing 'friendship' between Hamilton and Lady Strafford, referring to the speaker's 'Gratitude', and intriguingly placing him with her in the Hague, where she spent Winter 1714 while her husband visited England.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ See Linda Frey and Marsha Frey, 'Wentworth, Thomas, first earl of Strafford', *DNB*.

⁵⁸ Speck, 'Harley, Robert.'

⁵⁹ Loewenthal, 'Handel and Newburgh Hamilton', 1065. The manuscript is labelled as 'Hambleton's Verses' (BL Add MS 31152 fol. 65v). Like much of Hamilton's output, it alludes to Dryden, here using the phrase 'enchanted Ground', from Dryden's *The Flower and the Leaf*.

⁶⁰ The poem, a New Year's ode for 1714, makes clear that Anne and the speaker are outside 'Britain's lovely Isle' without Strafford. BL Add MS 31152 fols 64–5; compare the Straffords' letters, BL Add Ms 22226.

Party, poetry, and personal networks likely worked hand-in-hand in establishing Hamilton's link to the Wentworths. The family was strongly Tory and cultivated relationships with more prominent Tories in the *beau monde* into which they ascended in the early 1710s, as Wentworth was raised from baron to earl by the increasingly pro-Tory Queen.⁶¹ It was not a foregone conclusion that Wentworth would employ Tories: in 1711 Swift helped a young Whig poet, William Harrison, to a post as Strafford's secretary.⁶² Nonetheless, a fellow partyman with a taste for high culture may well have been attractive to the Straffords as they entered London society, with the new Lady Wentworth (a shipwright and politician's daughter) establishing a house in fashionable St James Square and ingratiating herself with court and government figures.⁶³ Hamilton's later role in the family clearly included catering to cultural needs, not only taking the children to the opera and offering news from and about Handel, but also negotiating the services of a musician, and keeping the Earl up to date on Pope's new satires against Lord Hervey, the Strafford's arch-Whig neighbour.⁶⁴

During peace negotiations, Wentworth was viewed as straightforwardly un-Whiggish and potentially Jacobitical. In February 1711, Swift reported a 'foolish rumour' around 'town' that the Earl was 'in the interest of France'.⁶⁵ The historical impeachment of his forebear Thomas Wentworth, chief councillor to Charles I, also politicised the family, as it was cited as an important precursor to proceedings against Sacheverell.⁶⁶ The link evidently made an impression on the Wentworths. The family in London kept Wentworth abreast of news of Sacheverell's trial, bought contemporary pamphlets and sent him copies of the *Examiner*, weaving together news of the trial with hints about peace negotiations, changes in government, and possible chances for new positions and ennoblement.⁶⁷ His brother sought out 'things that

⁶¹ Greig, *Beau monde*, 30–44, 151–6.

⁶² On Harrison, see, for instance, Winn, 'Style and Politics', 549.

⁶³ See Greig, *Beau monde*, especially 151–3.

⁶⁴ Wentworth papers, BL Add ms 31142, Hamilton to Strafford, 8 June 1732, fols 43–4; Hamilton to Strafford, 5 January 1733, fols 116–7. The Wentworths' collection of poetry preserves several satires concerning Hervey (BL Add ms 31152, fols 25–6, 32–3, 80).

⁶⁵ Jonathan Swift, et al., *Journal to Stella* (Oxford, 1948), ii.489.

⁶⁶ See *A Vindication of the Reverend Dr. Henry Sacheverell...* (London, 1711), 8–9; *An Impartial Account of... the Case of Dr. Henry Sacheverell...* (London, 1710), 10.

⁶⁷ See the letters between December 1709 and February 1712 in James Cartwright (ed.), *The Wentworth Papers, 1705–1739* (London, 1883), 99–101, 106, 109, 110–18, 155, 264. The verse preserved in the Wentworth papers from this period is exclusively pro-Sacheverell. BL Add ms 31152,

related to Tho: late Earle of Strafford [...] that Great man'; his mother, once lady of the bedchamber in James II's court, worried at the similarities between the unrest surrounding Sacheverell and 'the begining of the lait troubles'.⁶⁸

The Stuart ties in the family were strengthened with George I's exclusion of Tories like Strafford from favour and office. In late 1714, months after Hamilton had envisaged a reunited Earl and Lady Strafford enjoying 'The just rewards of love & Constancy' in view of 'th'admiring world', Strafford was recalled from the Hague and criticised for his negotiations by the reascendant Whigs.⁶⁹ He faced impeachment in 1715, and by the early 1720s he had 'turned to the Jacobites and corresponded with the Pretender, who appointed him commander-in-chief of the Jacobite forces north of the Humber'.⁷⁰ Strafford was permanently excluded from office under the Hanoverians, though his family still took part in London life, and he occasionally still appeared in parliament.⁷¹

Whatever Newburgh Hamilton's connection with the Straffords in this period, he had some friends among the Tory-leaning *beau monde*. The dedication of his play, *The Doating Lovers: or, The Libertine Tam'd* (London, 1715), to 'the Dutchess of Hamilton and Brandon' indeed gives the piece similar political colourings to his early poetry. In 1715, the Duchess was the recent widow of James Hamilton (1658–1712), a Scottish Jacobite-sympathiser who had been close to Charles II, Louis XIV, and James II. James Hamilton was twice imprisoned in the tower accession and engaged in a number of abortive political and military moves against William III and his successors. Later, he supported Sacheverell's acquittal and was rewarded under the incoming Tory government. Newburgh's connection with the Duchess is unclear, although the dedication claims her close encouragement and favour.⁷² Later, David Erskine Baker reported that Hamilton 'lived in the family of Duke Hamilton, and was

fol. 39, 100, 109; one scrap of manuscript verse commemorates Harley's stabbing in terms similar to *Changes* (fol. 68).

⁶⁸ Ibid., 100, 113; Greig, 37.

⁶⁹ BL Add MS 31152 fol. 65; Frey and Frey, 'Wentworth, Thomas'.

⁷⁰ Frey and Frey, 'Wentworth, Thomas'; compare Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 192.

⁷¹ On Strafford's political career, see Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714–60* (Cambridge, 1982), 27, 64, 106, 182, 198–9, 207, 217, 135. On the family's London life, see Greig, *Beau monde*.

⁷² *Doating Lovers*, 'Dedication' (unpaginated).

probably related to his grace.⁷³ Baker was born long after Hamilton entered the Strafford's service, and his suggestion may derive simply from the dedication, or gossip about the Duke's indecorous household.⁷⁴ It certainly contributes to Baker's waspish portrait of Hamilton as a lack-lustre dramatist whose plays were moderately successful only because his 'interest was so strong, and his acquaintance so extensive.'⁷⁵

It is possible that Hamilton looked to the Duke and Duchess as his 'friends' in the sense of kin: they had shared ancestry, whose details Newburgh may or may not have known, but which was witnessed by a shared crest, motto, and arms.⁷⁶ It also seems plausible that Newburgh perceived connections between the Duchess and his other Tory-Jacobitical affiliations. This is supported by the specification on the play's title page: 'As it is Acted at the Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*... under Letters Patent Granted by King *Charles* the Second.' Some plays at Lincoln's Inn Fields printed between 1700 and 1730 refer to the Theatre-Royal or His Majesty's servants, but to my knowledge this is a unique reminder of the theatre's founding under Charles II, and by extension the reopening of theatres at the Restoration.

This association between the Stuarts and theatre chimes with *Doating Lovers*' much less unusual adoption of Restoration comedy conventions. *Doating Lovers*' prologue cites the dramatist George Etherege, creator of the archetypal Restoration rake 'Dorimant', as the inimitable model of 'so young a Bard' as the play's author. (Etherege was similarly admired as an unreachable model for a 'tender unskill'd Pen' in *Changes* (4, 17).) Like many comedies in its vein, the play ends with the apparent taming of at least one libertine by conjugal love—albeit, in this case, an equivocal taming. The reformation of Hamilton's libertine is last-minute and sportive, reached through his future wife's wit and admirability rather than any moral or sentimental

⁷³ Baker, *Biographia Dramatica* (rev. edn, London, 1782), i.206. His supposition is related as fact in Charles Dibdin, *Complete History of the English Stage*, (London, 1800), v.79, and Winton Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (Oxford, 1990), 270.

⁷⁴ On the Duke's family, see, for instance, Rosalind Marshall, 'Hamilton, James, fourth duke of Hamilton and first duke of Brandon', *DNB*; Lord Berkeley to Thomas Wentworth, letter of 5 March 1712, in Cartwright, *Wentworth Papers*, 276.

⁷⁵ Baker, *Biographia Dramatica*, i.206.

⁷⁶ Newburgh used his coat of arms as a seal. See, for instance, BL Add. ms 31142, 186v. Compare Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 2, 18, 24–5. *Doating Lovers*' dedication is headed by the Duchess's arms.

remorse.⁷⁷ Following the bent of Wycherley's *Country Wife* or Aphra Behn's *Rover*, Hamilton even leaves lingering doubts about the strength of marriage bands. The 'Rover[] fix'd by' the 'bright Star' of a beautiful wife in his play only 'hopes to prove as Constant as she's Fair'.⁷⁸ And given the inevitable waning of the star of beauty in all young women, even this hope may, like Summer's lease, have all too short a date.

This closing uncertainty combines with the play's self-consciously 'lewd' beginnings—a conversation between two gentlemen and a pimp that brands '[t]he whole Town' as a pack of hypocritical, fornicating 'Libertine[s]—to make *Doating Lovers* closer to rawer Restoration-era pieces than to the rising genre of Whiggish 'sentimental' comedies, advocated by Richard Steele and others.⁷⁹ Steele had criticised Etherege's *Man of Mode* in the *Spectator*, arguing that this 'pattern of genteel Comedy' was in fact not only *ungenteel* but morally reprehensible.⁸⁰ In 1722 Steele's play *The Conscious Lovers* offered a counter-example of morally improving comedy. For Steele and likeminded reformers, comedy was not to invite ridicule of rakes like Dorimant, nor surreptitious identifications with his 'Ribaldry', but 'Polite[]', 'Lib'ral Mirth', provoked by characters worthy of emulation.⁸¹

Hamilton's earlier farce, *The Petticoat Plotter* (1712), still more clearly belongs to the rearguard of impolite un-Whiggish comedy, although the play's revivals in 1715, 1718 and 1728 indicate the continuing appetite for such supposedly 'archaic' plays during the period.⁸² Here, the dashing but impecunious True-Love, aided by crafty Plotwell, defies old Mr Thrifty's refusal to grant him the hand of Isabella Thrifty, and thwarts Thrifty's plans to marry Isabella to the desiccated but wealthy Sir Simon Scrape-All. The polite indirection of emerging sentimental heroes is lost on True-Love. He begins the play, after a moment's entreaty to his prospective father-in-law, by informing Thrifty that he is 'a doating old Fool' who in Scrape-All courts an 'accursed Usurer' and 'wither'd Crabtree, an useless Drone, that's a Nuisance to his

⁷⁷ On varieties of reform in Restoration comedy, see Robert Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660–1800* (Carbondale, 1983), 167–72; Aparna Gollapudi, *Moral Reform in Comedy and Culture, 1696–1747* (Farnham, 2011).

⁷⁸ *Doating Lovers*, 71 (my emphasis).

⁷⁹ Ibid., 1–2. On the following, see John O'Brien, 'Drama: Genre, Gender, Theater', in *A Concise Companion to the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cynthia Wall (Oxford, 2005), 183–201 at 191–3.

⁸⁰ *Spectator*, no. 65 (London, 15 May 1711). Published around the same time as this issue, *Changes* (37–9) explicitly attacked Steele's *Tatler*.

⁸¹ Leonard Welsted, prologue to *The Conscious Lovers*, quoted in O'Brien, 'Drama', 193.

⁸² Ibid. On the continuing appetite for Restoration comedy, see Hume, *Rakish Stage*, 64–81, 312–3.

Neighbours, and an Eye-sore to the World [...] foh, foh! he stinks so of Mortality, that I can't look at him but I think of my Grave.'⁸³ True-Love's characteristic modes of address are invective and plain-speaking. A high-minded pursuit of 'Love, sincere Love' and condemnation of others' venial self-interest does not keep him from the frank, almost sceptical-materialist arguments: 'Sir,' he tells Thrifty to excuse his poverty, 'I have Love, and you can give Riches, both are best.'⁸⁴ The sceptical-libertine colourings of the play are reinforced by a satire of a Puritan stock-character borrowed from Ben Jonson, the Schoolman-scribe Ananias, and by swaggering breaches of discretion like True-Love's public boast, shouted from the window of Thrifty's own barricaded house, that Isabella is 'Wedded and Bedded' by the end of the play.⁸⁵

Just as it shares the crude loftiness of *Changes*, this play resonates with its anti-Whig cultural politics. Written at the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession, when Whigs had held out for competitive advantages in foreign trade against Tory preferences for a speedy peace (and rights to exploit colonial territories), the play significantly shows Thrifty being cozened by a Spanish beauty, Theodosia.⁸⁶ This supposed Spaniard (Plotwell in Petticoats) reports that Thrifty's brother, a merchant in Spain, has died and left him fabulous profits, the first fruits of which Theodosia has brought in a pair of chests. In reality, Spain's riches are True-Love and a chaplain, smuggled in to solemnise a marriage with Isabella. Thrifty himself is another trader (he hopes Theodosia will teach him Spanish to use on the Exchange), and thus arguably a natural Whig if not a professed one in the play. Spectators with an allegorical turn of mind might have seen in True-love's triumph not only a satire of 'Whiggish' speculation and financial interest, but a story of a failed paternal protector of the happiness of the feminised nation (Isabella), perhaps even a failed Whiggish parliament, ousted by the nation's dashing 'Tory' true-love.

Yet the narrative of one ruling man ousting another is slightly complicated by the play's allegiance to patriarchal authority. Some 'Whiggish' contemporary playwrights used intergenerational domestic dramas to imply the nation's progress from autocratic

⁸³ Hamilton, *The Petticoat-Plotter* (London, 1720), 6–8.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 23, 56.

⁸⁶ See Pincus, 'Addison's Empire.' Trade's importance in perceptions of the peace is evident in satires like *The Queen's Speech* (1711), in Ellis, *Poems on Affairs of State*, 533–5.

rule towards liberal governments administered by younger bands of brothers.⁸⁷ By contrast, Hamilton's Plotters stage a forthright, proud, lustful, and violent opposition to existing authority—but less to authoritarians *per se* than to wrong-headed, money-grubbing ones. Once the needful plotting is over, True-Love dedicates himself to earning Thrifty's 'Love'; the Plotters then abase themselves before the father and plead for a 'general Indemnity'.⁸⁸ The play ends with a restoration of the old order, inaugurated, like Charles II's Restoration, by a general pardon. Isabella's attitude to resistance, meanwhile, might be read as a twisted version of Tory theories of passive obedience: allowing True-Love time to mount his active resistance, Isabella 'seemingly compl[ies] with th[e] unnatural Match' to Scrape-all.⁸⁹ In rehearsing this stereotypical image of femininity as passive yet dissimulative, Hamilton's farce also offers one way of imagining the appropriate position of the body politic in the face of unjust rule. Although inconclusive, these threads in the farce create Tory-leaning parallels between political and petticoat plots.

Newburgh Hamilton's known publications before his collaboration with Handel—his music ode and two plays—therefore harmonize with the party-political stance of *Changes*. They suggest a strongly anti-Whig author, aligned with a version of British culture predating 1688, and sympathetic to Tory and some Jacobitical patrons and values. Hamilton's collaborations with Handel, by contrast, have been read as politically neutral or neutralizing; as aligned with Whig Opposition (in *Samson*); or as fairly clearly anti-Jacobite (the *Occasional Oratorio*).⁹⁰ Hamilton's arrangement of texts for the *Occasional Oratorio*, supporting military action against a Jacobite uprising, is in itself unsurprising, given that people of many political stripes feared and deplored the uprising, but also given that his brother Charles fought against the Jacobites at Culloden.⁹¹ Changing political circumstances, cultural changes like the

⁸⁷ O'Brien, 'Drama', 196–8.

⁸⁸ *Petticoat Plotter*, 58.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 11, 39–40.

⁹⁰ On the neutralizing of politics, see, for example, Anthony Hicks, 'Handel and the Idea of an Oratorio', *Cambridge Companion to Handel*, 145–63, at 155–6 (on *Alexander's Feast*); Stella Revard, 'Restoring the Political Context of *Samson Agonistes*: Milton, Handel, and Saint-Saëns', in *Milton, Rights and Liberties*, ed. Christophe Tournu and Neil Forsyth (Bern, 2007), 379–400.

⁹¹ Hamilton, *Memoirs*, 26–7. My thanks to the anonymous reviewers of this article for comments on this point. Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 78–80, discusses some complexities facing interpreters of eighteenth-century politics and Handel's oratorios. Recent studies of change and continuity in political ideology and sensibility include Allan Macinnes, et al., *Living with Jacobitism, 1690–1788* (London, 2014); Matthew McCormack, 'Rethinking "Loyalty" in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *JECs* 35.3 (2012), 407–21; Toni Bowers, *Force or Fraud: British Seduction Stories and the Problem of*

rise of politeness and sensibility, and differences in generic expectations go a long way to understanding further differences between Hamilton's early and later writings.

We might nonetheless explore continuities in politico-religious sensibility between Hamilton's earlier and later texts, and productively situate his collaborations with Handel within the political world of his network of 'friends'.

IV. Texts for Handel: *Alexander's Feast* and *Samson*

Hamilton's first arrangement for Handel was a reverent adaptation of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* (first performed London, January 1736/7). This was a text by a notorious Stuart loyalist and Catholic convert, capable of being read as a Jacobite satire of William III.⁹² Yet it was also one of the most popular poems of the eighteenth century, and hardly regarded as politically sensitive. As Hamilton himself noted, the ode was 'universally allow'd to be the most excellent of its Kind', and had 'long done Honour to the Nation'.⁹³ To have this national treasure set by the nation's most popular composer was a safe bet, since 'it [was] next to an Improbability, to offer the World any thing in those *Arts* more perfect, than the united Labours and utmost Efforts of a *Dryden* and a *Handel*.'⁹⁴ If there is cultural-politicking afoot, it is super-subtle: Hamilton's promotion of the poem fits with his earlier affiliations and tastes without obviously furthering a Tory or anti-Whig agenda.

If scholars are right to attribute to Hamilton the dedicatory poem found in the 1739 edition of the word-book, then Hamilton's tone here, too, differs from his early writings. The brash and provocative stance of earlier arguments, and formal ingenuity of earlier poetry, is replaced by moderate sentiments in standard heroic couplets. Where Hamilton's music ode followed Orpheus' narrative in order to depict dramatic passions and licentious desires (like those experienced by Alexander), the dedicatory poem distances Handel from Orpheus' quasi-magical powers over animals and animal passions:

Let others charm the list'ning scaly Brood,

Resistance, 1660–1760 (Oxford, 2011); David Womersley, et al., *'Cultures of Whiggism': New Essays on English Literature and Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Newark, 2005).

⁹² Bessie Proffitt, 'Political Satire in Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 11 (1970), 1307–16; C.P. Macgregor, "'Lying Odes": Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*', in *Sustaining Literature: Essays on Literature, History, and Culture, 1500–1800*, Greg Clingham (Cranbury, 2007), 67–84.

⁹³ George Frederic Handel, et al., *Alexander's Feast...* (London, 1739), Preface.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Or tame the savage Monsters of the Wood

[...]

Or force ev'n Things inanimate to move.⁹⁵

It instead extols Handel's moderation, 'controul,' and refinement: he 'calm[s] the Passions, and improve[s] the Heart;' subdues 'Rage' and 'Pride'; brings 'Peace' and 'Harmony'; and directs 'new-kindling Love to chaste Desire.'⁹⁶ Does this difference simply mark the distance between a dedicatory eulogy and other genres, or might we see here some capitulation or accommodation to the polite 'Whiggish' culture opposed by Sacheverell, but increasingly entrenched in 1730s London?⁹⁷

One echo we might hear of Hamilton's earlier political stance lies in his most significant intervention in Dryden's text. Hamilton wrote that in laying out the ode he had 'confin'd [himself] to a plain Division of it into *Airs*, *Recitative*, or *Chorus*'s; looking upon the Words in general so sacred, as scarcely to violate one in the Order of its first Place'.⁹⁸ This is mostly but not quite true: the final stanza from Hamilton's music ode (which, as mentioned, itself borrowed from *Alexander's Feast*) is appended to Dryden's text, and Dryden's design of having the Chorus repeat four or more lines from the end of each stanza is modified to omit or abbreviate many refrains, and to assign some text solely to the Chorus. New repetitions are also made to accommodate da capo arias in movements 17, 19 and 21. But a longer and slightly more substantial intervention comes in stanza four, where the musician Timotheus laments the fall of the Persian King Darius—an allusion, according to readings of Dryden's poem as a Jacobite-leaning satire, to James Stuart. In his arrangement of this stanza, Hamilton's libretto suggests a repetition in a da capo aria of the first four lines of the following passage from Dryden:

He sung Darius Great and Good,

By too severe a Fate,

⁹⁵ *To Mr. Handel*, lines 1–2, 4, in *ibid.*, 5–6. Compare Ruth Smith's observation that Handel in the poem counters the subversive effects of Timotheus' music. 'Timotheus, Alexander, *Semele* and Handel', *Handel Newsletter* 14.1 (2003), 1–4.

⁹⁶ *To Mr. Handel*, lines 6–8, 10, 16.

⁹⁷ Generic differences are evident in another possible Hamilton publication, the satirical *Advice to Mr. Handel* (1739). See Chrissochoidis, "'True Merit'", 78–9, 84. For a review of the extensive literature on politeness, see Klein, 'Politeness'; for a dissenting view of the connection between politeness and Whiggism, see Markku Peltonen, 'Politeness and Whiggism, 1688–1732', *Historical Journal*, 48.2 (2005), 391–414.

⁹⁸ Hamilton, Preface to *Alexander's Feast*.

[Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen]⁹⁹

*Fallen from his high Estate,
And welt'ring in his Blood.*

*Deserted at his utmost Need,
By those his former Bounty fed,
On the bare Earth expos'd he lies,
Without a Friend to close his Eyes.*¹⁰⁰

Following lines describing Alexander's sorrowful response to Timotheus, Hamilton departs from Dryden's text by condensing, altering and repeating this passage a second time, for the chorus:

*Behold Darius Great and Good
Fallen, welt'ring in his Blood;
On the bare Earth expos'd he lies,
Without a Friend to close his Eyes.*¹⁰¹

No longer framed as Timotheus' indirect speech, the text now appeals directly to Alexander, and perhaps to Handel's audience, underscoring the pathos of fallenness and defeat, and the sheer physical humiliation (or lowering) of the former ruler's body, a sight implicitly shameful for his conquerors as well as his friends. In other repetitions, Hamilton highlights the passionate responses of Alexander or his courtiers to Timotheus' song. This repetition, by contrast, draws us into the back-story to Alexander's feast, the forgotten passion-inducing defeat of a 'Great and Good' ruler.

These same lines and sentiments resonated with the author of *Changes*, who described the Whigs taking advantage of an 'easie Queen,' 'lull'd asleep' and 'led astray' 'by Fav'rites' (as Alexander was by Timotheus and Thais), and the subsequent 'fall' of Britain and 'British Patriots' (150, 153, 157, 160). Harley's fall from favour before the 1710 election particularly echoes Darius' fall:

The faithful *Harley* met a rigid Fate,

⁹⁹ Dryden's non-rhyming line is absent from the 1739 word books, although set by Handel and found in the 1736 text. *Alexander's Feast...* ([London?], 1739), 3–4; George Frideric Handel, *Das Alexander-Fest, oder, Die Macht der Musik*, ed. Konrad Ameln (Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, Part I, vol. 1; Kassel, 1957), no. 12, bars 24–8. This is probably one of the lines Hamilton altered to 'reduce' the poem 'to the present [regularity-focused] Taste in Sounds' (*Alexander's Feast* (1739), Preface).

¹⁰⁰ Handel, et al., *Alexander's Feast*, 16.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

Loyal, yet thought a Traytor to the State,
No fault, but that he was both Good and Great. (161–3)

Hamilton's interest in Handelian fallen rulers may be evident as early as his subscription to *Rodelinda* (1725), the story of a usurped king who, following defeat in battle, goes into hiding until he can regain his throne, and whose pathetic complaint, 'Dove sei, amato bene?', is the opera's best-known aria.

Hamilton's apparent concern for defeated heroes—among whom we might count the Earl of Strafford—would be given full rein in his next collaboration with Handel, his arrangement of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* for *Samson* (first version 1741, revised version performed 1743). Hamilton's Preface to *Samson*'s word-book remarked on Handel's recent setting of Milton's *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, but also linked the composer's new oratorio with *Alexander's Feast*, reminding audiences that Handel had 'already added new Life and Spirit to some of the finest Things in the *English Language*, particularly that inimitable Ode of *Dryden's*, which no Age nor Nation ever excell'd.'¹⁰² This comment quietly promotes Hamilton's previous collaboration with Handel, and simultaneously positions Milton, the unwavering republican and enemy of the High Church, and Dryden, the Catholic convert and Stuart loyalist, as equivalent sources of a national pride grounded in the '*English Language*' rather than ideology.

Like this positioning, Hamilton's adaptation of Milton can seem politically muted, at most appealing to a middle ground of national feeling. Deborah Rooke, for example, sees in Hamilton's libretto 'characteristically British ideals' like 'resistance to tyranny and defeat of idolatrous (Catholic) religion.'¹⁰³ Yet, as Ruth Smith has argued, the cultural politics of *Samson* are delicate and (perhaps intentionally) polyvalent.¹⁰⁴ Despite contemporary attempts to depoliticise Milton, the author's name still carried difficult political freight. Milton's republicanism was unpalatable for many, but his ideology nonetheless recognisably belonged to the party-political ancestry of eighteenth-century Whigs. Milton's adherence to his principles after the Restoration also made him a broader touchstone of fervent opposition (recall his use in the Tory satires *Changes* and *Faction Display'd*). Smith observes that Milton was particularly

¹⁰² George Frederic Handel, et al., *Samson* (London, 1743), Preface.

¹⁰³ Rooke, *Israelite Oratorio*, 120.

¹⁰⁴ Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 295.

looked to as a ‘figurehead’ of Patriot Whig opposition to the King and Prime Minister Walpole in the late 1730s.¹⁰⁵ This chimes with the oratorio’s probable genesis in November 1739, recounted in a well-known letter from the Opposition Whig Anthony Ashley Cooper, Fourth Earl of Shaftesbury, to his cousin James Harris, himself later a Whig MP: ‘Jemmy Noel read through the whole’ of Milton’s *Samson*, ‘and whenever he rested to take breath Mr Handel (who was highly pleas’d with the piece) played [...] & his harmony was perfectly adapted to the sublimity of the poem.’¹⁰⁶ By early January, Harris, a keen Handelian, was sending to Jennens via Shaftesbury another Milton text to stimulate Handel’s powers, the ‘Allegro and Penseroso.’¹⁰⁷

On these and other grounds, Smith suggests that Handel’s *Samson*, with its ‘basic plot of the renewal and exertion of national strength against the heathen oppressor,’ alongside its dedication to the Prince of Wales, a centre of Opposition energies, may nod to the Whig Patriots’ support for war with Spain.¹⁰⁸ Still, Smith also notes that the topical resonances were in many ways ‘unspecific: the audience can associate the Israelite-Philistine confrontation with any hostilities, [...] [or] any phase of them.’¹⁰⁹ In light of Hamilton’s earlier writings, can we explore other implications in the libretto, heard by audiences or not? First, we might not be surprised to find an emphasis on conquering false religion (and not only Catholicism) from an apparent former champion of the High Churchman Sacheverell and the ‘*Noble Patriots*’ who defended him.¹¹⁰

Second, Hamilton’s participation in an apparently Patriot Opposition-oriented project is similarly comprehensible without assuming he straightforwardly abandoned earlier political sympathies. Unsurprisingly, the concerns of Tories and Patriot Whigs not infrequently converged in opposition to Walpole’s ruling Whig faction from the 1720s–1740s. The Earl of Strafford, as a Tory peer, cooperated with Opposition

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 293. See further Dustin Griffin’s *Regaining Paradise: Milton and the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1986), 7, 14–16.

¹⁰⁶ Donald Burrows and Rosemary Dunhill (eds), *Music and Theatre in Handel’s World: The Family Papers of James Harris, 1732–1780* (Oxford, 2002), 80.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 85–9.

¹⁰⁸ Smith, *Handel’s Oratorios*, 292. A virtuoso recent study of Clive (the first Dalila) extends the idea of a ‘Patriot subtext’ in the oratorio. Berta Joncus, ‘Handel at Drury Lane: Ballad Operas and the Production of Kitty Clive’, *JAMS* 131.2 (2006), 179–226 at 221.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 295.

¹¹⁰ *Changes*, title page.

Whigs in electioneering in 1734.¹¹¹ And the Jemmy Noel who recited Milton before his brother-in-law, Shaftesbury, came from a once strongly Royalist and now active Tory family; as a Tory MP, he voted against the Whig administration in almost all recorded divisions.¹¹²

Adding to the areas of convergence between Tory and Opposition Whig interests is the turn among Hamilton's 'friends' towards a more conciliatory political stance in the period of *Samson*'s composition. After the Earl of Strafford's death in 1739, his son evidently increased efforts to distance the family name from Jacobitism or virulent Toryism. In 1741 he married the daughter of the Duke of Argyll, a Whig bigwig who had led troops against the Jacobite rising in 1715. In early 1742, immediately following Walpole's resignation as Prime Minister, we find Wentworth inviting his son, the art lover and Whig politician Horace Walpole, to dinner; the two became friends, partly through shared pursuit of the arts.¹¹³ Hamilton is unlikely to have been untouched by the second Earl's efforts, although he remained in Anne Wentworth's household. We might speculate that the death of the elder Strafford not only gave Hamilton more time to develop his poetico-Handelian interests, but also helped make collaboration between the steward and fêted Hanoverian composer appealing to both Handel and Hamilton's employers.

In this double context of overlapping Tory-Opposition interests and of political amelioration, we can imagine Hamilton's dedication of *Samson* to the Prince of Wales as an appropriate political gesture. We might nonetheless remain alert to continuities in cultural-political sensibility between Hamilton's early and later writings. Christine Gerrard some years ago outlined what is perhaps a parallel case: the way Alexander Pope experimented with genres of praise and narratives of national renewal beloved of the Patriots in whose circles he moved, but remained unwilling or hesitant to dramatize the straightforward recoveries such narratives offered for Whigs.¹¹⁴ This makes good sense: to imagine a national recovery dependent on deposing Walpole or

¹¹¹ Colley, *In Defiance*, 217. Broad-sides and ballads in the family collection from this decade suggest a continuing interest in propaganda against Walpole and the King, compatible with Whig Patriot cooperation (e.g. BL Add MS 31152 fols 12, 23), but also against Hanoverian rule more fundamentally (e.g. fols 16, 13).

¹¹² Romney Sedgwick (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1715–1754* (London, 1970), ii.296.

¹¹³ See Horace Walpole to Horace Mann (4 February 1741–2), *Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. Peter Cunningham, vol. 1 (London, 1858), 123–4; Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England...* (London, 1849), iii.813.

¹¹⁴ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, 68–95, especially 93–5.

waiting for one Hanoverian to succeed another is simpler than imagining a recovery dependent on an entire party returning from the wilderness, a reform of the national Church, or the resolution of problematic successions stretching over multiple generations.

Perhaps Hamilton had some similar reasons to Pope for hesitating to depict a glorious national revival at the end of his narrative. For where Milton closed his *Samson* with Manoah and the chorus affirming God's steadfast if 'unsearchable' 'favour[]' for his chosen people, and dismissing the need for 'lamentation', Hamilton's libretto originally closed with much stronger mourning.¹¹⁵ Here, Hamilton skillfully interwove some of the most elegaic and lyrical lines from *Samson Agonistes*' conclusion with phrases from Milton's early *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester*, uncharacteristically (for the mature Milton) a pathos-filled elegy for a prominent Catholic noblewoman, Jane Paulet (d. 1631). Her husband, John Paulet (1598?–1675), likewise a Catholic and a committed royalist during the Civil War and Commonwealth, would be commemorated by Dryden as an 'Ark' of the 'faith' and paragon of suffering loyalty.¹¹⁶ The publication of Dryden's epitaph for Paulet in 1712 (two years after another Paulet voted for Sacheverell's acquittal) implicitly politicised the family's memory, suggesting that Charles I's execution belonged to a 'rebellion' for whose ill effects even the Restoration government 'could not [make] recompense' to Paulet, and playing on a heroic and martyrological ethos (familiar to the author of *Changes*) in its depiction of a man who 'By sufferings rose, and gave the law to fate.'¹¹⁷

Hamilton's turn to the *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester* might, then, have seemed inappropriate to anyone who associated Samson with stoical-republican resistance. For a writer with another mindset, an epitaph displaying what William Parker calls 'the careless elegance and polished irregularity of a Cavalier poem' might have a number of uses.¹¹⁸ Formally, the *Epitaph*'s rhyming tetrameters better lend themselves to musical setting, according to mid-eighteenth-century preferences, than

¹¹⁵ Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, lines 1720, 1723–4, 1746. Henceforth cited in the text from Laura Ferrell and Thomas Luxon's edition at *The Milton Reading Room* (<www.darmouth.edu/~milton>), accessed 13 February 2015.

¹¹⁶ Dryden, *Epitaph on the Monument of the Marquis of Winchester*, in *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations* (London, 1712), 283, line 9.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, lines 2, 6, 14. Paulet is named as a not-guilty lord in *Britannia: A Poem*, p.9.

¹¹⁸ Parker, *Milton: A Biography* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1996), 96.

the blank verse that predominates in *Samson Agonistes*.¹¹⁹ Hamilton's choice also responds to Manoah's evocation of a funeral procession, laurels and floral tributes in Milton's text—resonating with the *Epitaph*'s offering of 'som Flowers, and som Bays, | For thy Hears to strew the ways'—alongside less immediately evident parallels.¹²⁰ Milton's semichorus, for instance, described Samson as a phoenix whose 'fame' rises 'In the Arabian woods' from 'her ashy womb' (1700, 1703, 1706), thereby activating long-standing associations between the phoenix and the resurrected Christ, between Christ and Samson, and (more distantly) Christ and motherhood.¹²¹ Sylvan imagery, the tomb, and the 'Mothers Womb' are also closely linked in the *Epitaph*, as the Marchioness's death in childbirth allows her to become a self-sacrificing, Christlike figure who, 'to give the world encrease, | Shortned hast [her] own lives lease' (51–2). As the Marchioness 'fled' 'Through pangs' 'to felicity' (68), so Hamilton's Samson becomes a model 'hero' by 'fall[ing]' 'Through sorrow to felicity'.¹²²

Hamilton's chosen intertext thus hints at Samson's association with Christlike martyrdom, a Christian heroism which triumphs through passive *pathos* rather than Miltonic agonism. Milton had smoothed the way to such associations by referring in *Samson Agonistes*' introduction to 'a Tragedy' called '*Christ suffering*'.¹²³ Hamilton's emphasis on passion in his libretto could be seen as no more than typical of mid-century preferences for sentiment, especially in Handel's oratorios.¹²⁴ But it is

¹¹⁹ *Samson Agonistes*'s mixing of verse forms may help explain Handel's willingness to set it, while declining numerous encouragements to set *Paradise Lost*. To construct *Samson*'s airs, duets and choruses, Hamilton not only adapted rhyming sections of Milton's drama and interpolated text from his minor poems, but also ingeniously turned fragments and even whole lines of blank verse into rhyming movements. See *Samson*, nos 8, 10, 25, 26, 33, 34, 44, 45. On Handel's approach to Milton, see Ruth Smith, 'Milton Modulated for Handel's Music', *Milton in the Long Restoration*, ed. Ann Baynes Coiro and Blair Hoxby (Oxford, forthcoming 2016).

¹²⁰ Milton, *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester*, lines 57–8, from Thomas Luxon (ed.), *The Milton Reading Room*.

¹²¹ There was a long-standing typological connection between Samson and Christ, as Rooke notes, without suggesting that Hamilton utilised the connection. *Handel's Israelite Oratorio Libretti*, 100, 120. On Milton's phoenix, see, for instance, Sanford Budick, 'Milton's Joban Phoenix in *Samson Agonistes*', *Early Modern Literary Studies* 11.2 (2005), 1–15.

¹²² Quotations from Georg Friedrich Händel, *Samson*, ed. Hans Dieter Clausen (Hallische Händel-Ausgabe, Part I, vol. 18.1; Kassel, 2011), Act III, sc. 3. Henceforth cited in the text. On the Marchioness, see Louis Schwartz, *Milton and Maternal Mortality* (Cambridge, 2009), 91–140.

¹²³ Milton, 'Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy.' This is the only tragedy mentioned by name, and the only non-pagan one.

¹²⁴ See the illuminating study by Jonathan Rhodes Lee, 'From Amelia to Calista and Beyond: Sentimental Heroines, "Fallen" Women and Handel's Oratorio Revisions for Susanna Cibber', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 27.1 (2015), 1–34 (18–25, 33); further Ruth Smith, 'Intellectual Contexts of Handel's Oratorios', in *Music in Eighteenth-Century England: Essays in Memory of Charles*

intriguing that Hamilton transformed Milton's last lines, with their stoic-republican flavour (God 'dismissed' his servant 'With peace' and 'calm of mind all passion spent' (1757–8)), into final lines that, while they similarly hymned 'Rest' and 'Peace', did so through an intensely pathetic intertext which resembled the royalist poetry admired by the author of *Changes* much more than the sentimental writings we now largely associate with eighteenth-century Whiggish culture.

Handel 'astonishing[ly],' for the editor of the Halle edition, originally 'went along with [Hamilton's] design, and wrote his *Fine* under a pianissimo finale; for his usual custom [...] was to have [oratorios] end festively with trumpets and drums' (xxvi). This ending was revised before the oratorio's first performance a few years later: the new version ends with an unequivocally celebratory chorus from Milton's *At a Solemn Musick*. Yet Samson's final aria, 'Thus when the sun from's wat'ry bed,' remains unchanged in the new version, and lends a slight taint to the oratorio's sense of a happy ending. In this aria—an interpolation from *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*—Samson uses the epic simile of a sunrise to describe his plans to 'make Jehovah's Glory known' in his final deed (Act III, sc. i). This sunrise image neatly reverses the image of eclipse in Samson's first aria. But the reversal is somewhat incomplete: Samson's Sun is ominous, withdrawn and haunted: 'pillow[ing] his chin' on a wave rather than coming out 'as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run his course' (Psalm 19); covered with the 'cloudy red' of slaughter; and watching as 'wand'ring shadows ghastly pale' 'troop to their infernal jail' in the 'grave'—Samson's last word in Hamilton's text (Act III, sc. i).¹²⁵ The ghosts, of course, will be Samson's Philistines, and the red sun foreshadows not only their deaths but Samson's. Hamilton's adaptation is especially apt since Samson's death was a common antitype for Christ's crucifixion, alluded to by Milton in his celebration of the infant Christ's first day.¹²⁶ Nonetheless, a 'red and lowering' sky in

Cudworth, ed. Richard Lockett and Christopher Hogwood (Cambridge, 1983), 115–134, especially 118.

¹²⁵ Some biblical commentaries indeed derived Samson's name from '*Shemesh, the sun*': 'because of his great strength', 'the sun is compared to a *strong man*'; (Ps. xix. 5) why should not a strong man then be compared to the sun when he goes for in his strength? [...] [Samson is] [a] type of christ, the Sun of righteousness.' Matthew Henry, *Exposition of the Old and New Testament* (5th edn, London, 1761), vol. 1, commentary on Judges 13:24.

¹²⁶ Milton draws on the symbolism of the 'Proleptic Passion, the sacrifice made visible already in [Christ's] Infancy', a common medieval figure akin to typology in its use of one 'historical' event (nativity) to foreshadow another (crucifixion). See, for instance, Alfred Acres, 'The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World', *Art Bulletin* 80.3 (1998), 422–452 at 424–5.

the morning tells of ‘bad weather’ to come (Matthew 16:2–3), and who could say how long the storm would last? Perhaps only until Samson’s death, as the jubilant final version of the oratorio suggests. But perhaps longer. Hamilton’s choices at least make the oratorio comparatively open to a Tory- or even Jacobite-leaning understanding of England’s long and uncertain road to recovery.

Finally, there are what we might call connotative connections between the intense passivity sometimes diagnosed in Handel’s Samson (‘by the mid-point of the action, if such it can be called, the hero has *done* nothing’), and older Tory theories of passive resistance to the powers that be.¹²⁷ Nonresistance was no longer a prominent issue dividing Tory and Whig in late 1730s politics; yet as a cultural ideal it had a much longer life. Toni Bowers has argued that in a strand of seduction stories, a widespread plot in eighteenth-century narratives, heroines mount what she terms ‘collusive resistance,’ an attenuated version of passive resistance. This stance, she shows, created a ‘paradoxical model’ of ‘*resistance through submission*’ to power. It ‘was especially valuable’, she argues, ‘to writers with ideological leanings toward tory principles, writers for whom resistance to legitimate authority was difficult to justify even when it was unequivocally necessary.’¹²⁸

This model is suggestive for Hamilton’s *Samson*. His narrative begins after a moral seduction that—more explicitly than most eighteenth-century narratives—blends the personal-sexual and national-political, devastating Samson’s personal identity and his nation’s fate. Samson’s passivity is intensified because Milton’s story begins in gaol, after Samson’s capitulation to Delilah. When *Samson Agonistes* was published in 1671, Samson’s fall likely looked analogous to the fall of the Commonwealth; for later writers and Handel’s first listeners, it might conceivably have spurred reflections on the quite different fall of the Stuarts. It is by confronting his agonising situation—life after the fall—that Hamilton’s passive hero comes to regain his honour or sense of purpose, through what could be seen as a spectacular, if extremely twisted, act of collusive resistance. The turning point comes when the Philistines demand that Samson ‘come’ and ‘show | Some public proof’ of his enormous strength as an entertainment at their feast to Dagon (Act III, sc. i). Samson first refuses to ‘be their fool, | And play before their God,’ but is warned that he will face death or be

¹²⁷ Smith, *Handel’s Oratorios*, 293. On connotation, see William Webber’s review of Thomas McGeary, *The Politics of Opera in Handel’s Britain*, *Music & Letters*, 95.1 (2014), 99–102 at 100.

¹²⁸ Bowers, *Force or Fraud*, 4.

physically forced to attend the games (ibid.). Samson then begins to comply, sensing that godly purposes can align his will with that of his oppressors. He avoids the maximum affront to his dignity by going voluntarily rather than being taken ‘like a wild beast trail’d’ through the streets (ibid.), and finally capitulates to the demands to show his strength—by destroying the pagan temple and its worshippers, and submitting himself to death under the temple’s roof.

Undoubtedly this dramatic irony could be attractive to individuals with different purposes and ideologies—witness its appeal to Milton and later Whig monarchists. Interestingly, though, *Samson Agonistes* is more scrupulous than *Samson* in distinguishing between independence and coercion, autonomy and heteronomy. This is as we might expect, given republican views of freedom as independence from even potential coercion or influence, and so as absolutely incompatible with collusion.¹²⁹ Milton has Samson expatiate on the difference between being *physically forced* to do something against one’s will, and basely *submitting one’s will* because it *seems* unavoidable (1363–1379). To retain his dignity, Milton’s Samson must independently choose to attend the Philistine festival or be compelled to do so, not just comply. There would be no grey-zone between what Bowers, quoting Alexander Pope, calls ‘force or fraud,’ rape or seduction, absolute resistance or submission: it is just this grey-zone that continued to fascinate writers with ‘tory-oriented sensibilities’.¹³⁰

Hamilton omits Milton’s deliberations about free will, and a reordering of Milton’s material makes his Samson seem less independent, formulating his will in compromised dialogue with his enemies. This is a matter of subtle emphasis. Hamilton’s Samson, like Milton’s, ‘begin[s] to feel | Some inward motions’ to attend the Philistines before their messenger appears to renew his demand (Act III, sc. i). Differences emerge with the Philistines’ threat to find ‘engines’ to ‘move’ Samson, ‘though’ he were ‘solid rock’ (Act III, sc. i; Milton, 1396–8). Milton’s Samson reflects, to himself, that he could kill some Philistines if he tried to resist, but is nonetheless ‘content to go’ voluntarily to avoid degrading force (1403). His focus remains on the limits and nature of his concession: a recognition of the Philistines’ *physical* superiority, he insists, does not affect his moral integrity (1408–9). Hamilton’s hero more rashly (and illogically) declares to his interlocutor: ‘Vain were

¹²⁹ See Quentin Skinner, ‘A Third Concept of Liberty’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 117 (2002), 237–68, especially 247–51.

¹³⁰ Bowers, *Force or Fraud*, 5.

their art if tried, I yield to go | Not through your streets be like a wild beast trail'd'
(Act III, sc. i).

It serves Milton's purposes to underscore the futility of Samson's physical resistance. Hamilton, by adding Samson's claim that any efforts to control him would themselves be futile ('Vain'), should he choose to resist, instead emphasises Samson's supernatural strength and chosen submissiveness. Similarly, in Milton's poem, even the Philistine messenger recognizes Samson's change of heart as a positive 'resolution' of will—although he then assumes, like any subject inured to tyranny, that the only path to greater freedom is currying favour: 'By this compliance thou wilt win the Lords | To favour, and perhaps to set thee free' (1410–2). Milton's Samson ignores him and addresses his final speech to his 'Brethren', closing with the reassurance that he will undertake 'Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy' (1413, 1424). Hamilton, meanwhile, omits reference to Samson's resolution. His Philistine still points to the benefits of compromise ('You thus may win the lords to set you free'), and Samson's reply seems to recognise that, within reason, he might seek favour through his accommodation ('In nothing I'll comply that's scandalous | Or sinful by our law', Act III, sc. i). Hamilton's drastic reduction of Milton's argumentation was clearly necessitated by the constraints of a libretto.¹³¹ Nonetheless, such tiny, potentially unreflecting, alterations in what *is* textually present point towards Hamilton's indifference to key Miltonic concepts like independence of will and resistance—and his receptiveness to images of Samson as a type of Christ, yielding to be 'led as a *lamb to the slaughter*.'¹³²

For some scholars, Samson's passivity means that the Israelite chorus (as proxy for the British nation) is the true hero of Handel's oratorio, and Samson a fallible man, no better than he should be.¹³³ Yet the oratorio seems also to carry traces of a different construction of heroism—one appropriate to High Church 'martyrs' like Charles I and Saxe-Weimar, though also crucial to broader Christian constructions of heroism—whose ultimate model is Christ, obedient unto death. This reading is strengthened by Hamilton's interpolation at crucial moments (Samson's last aria, the original close of the oratorio) of intertexts suggesting parallels between Samson and Christ. This is not

¹³¹ Hamilton discussed such constraints in the first word-book (*Samson: An Oratorio* (London: 1743), unpaginated preface). On the word-books, see Donald Burrows, 'The Word-Books for Handel's Performances of *Samson*', *Musical Times* 146.1890 (2005), 7–15.

¹³² See Henry, commentary on Judges 15:9–17.

¹³³ See Smith, 'Timotheus, Alexander, *Semele*'; compare Rooke, *Israelite Oratorio*, 111–20.

to say that all Hamilton's adaptations point in one direction; as Aspden observes, '[i]nterpretations need not be univocal to have validity'. Indeed, the absence of smoking guns pushes us to recognise interpretation 'not as an open-and-shut case, but [...] a matter of potentiality'.¹³⁴

VI. Conclusion

Integrating early works, including *Changes*, into Hamilton's oeuvre provides varied possibilities for thinking about his collaborations with Handel. We might see Hamilton setting forth his credentials as a pen for party in a topical polemic in *Changes*, then moving through politically-coloured plays and a music ode, and into a genre that did whatever cultural-political work it did discretely, stewarding others' words and creating vehicles for others' tunes.

Changes' support for Sacheverell and Hamilton's family ties to the Church of Ireland strengthen what might already have been supposed: that Hamilton shared with the overwhelming majority of Handel's English librettists an affiliation with the High Church cause.¹³⁵ Hamilton's early religio-political credentials, like Jennens's, likely closed outlets for writerly industry and skill that remained open to Whigs in pursuit of cultural capital; plausibly, his employers' changing position and the lessening of the rage of party helped ensure that the oratorios were not one of those blocked outlets. My explorations of *Alexander's Feast* and *Samson* further suggest a continuing sensitivity towards suffering and fallen heroes. This literary-affective sensibility included political resonances in eighteenth-century culture, though, as contemporaries recognised, the politics of suffering and resisting could become fiendishly strange. 'We are now come to fresh paradoxical circumstances,' as one Tory writer commented during riots surrounding Sacheverell's trial: 'while the rabble are pulling down houses out of zeal for passive obedience, the vile' Whig 'ministry' was oppressing the 'nation' and its rioters 'in defense of forcible resistance.'¹³⁶

Different threads might emerge from readings of Hamilton's possible libretto for *Semele*, a 'baudy' tale adapted from another late-seventeenth-century master, Congreve, or the *Occasional Oratorio*.¹³⁷ With the former, we might stress

¹³⁴ Aspden, 'Ariadne's Clew', 758–9.

¹³⁵ Ruth Smith, 'Handel's English Librettists', *Cambridge Companion to Handel*, 92–108.

¹³⁶ Quoted in Ellis, *Poems on Affairs of State*, 346.

¹³⁷ The term is Jennens's; see Andrews, *Historical Context*, 182–6.

Hamilton's taste for Restoration wits and licentious dramatists (Dryden, Wycherley, Etheridge). With the latter, *Changes*' (factious) opposition to faction and tumult could come to the fore, and suggest Hamilton's contribution to what Gillen D'Arcy Wood calls the 'rituals of Handelian consensus' in Romantic Britain.¹³⁸ For Wood, the oratorios' function as a site of national consensus involved the paradox that, 'though full of politics themselves', 'the oratorios as a social phenomenon' came to stand 'for the neutralization of political division'—a neutralization that was in turn deployed in politically-charged debates.¹³⁹

This article's examination of Hamilton's early writings does not reveal conclusive authorial purposes, ideological or aesthetic, for his Handel texts. But considering Hamilton's intertextual and rhetorical predilections, his affiliations and 'friends', encourages us to think of Handel's vocal works as shot through with multiple, potentially contradictory, cultural-political meanings and resonances. It is itself no new thing in Handel studies to deprioritize a search for single authorial purposes, whether aesthetic or ideological. Many more words about Hamilton, but in some senses *plus ça change*.

There are, however, two points worth raising in conclusion. A prominent strategy in Handel scholarship for deprioritising the search for single authorial visions has been to remove discussions from the sphere of (authorial) intentionality by emphasizing reception studies and listener theory, alongside broadly deconstructive methods that stress inherent indeterminacy or multiplicity.¹⁴⁰ One response to this strategy is to suggest that, no matter what audiences thought, and no matter how indeterminate all texts may be, Handel and his collaborators had intentions, and these concerned the creation and production of music, something above the fray of partisan or topical politics. In discussing Hamilton, however, I have hoped to reemphasize the fact that not only listeners, but also creators and their creations, are changeable, multiple, and not self-transparent. The arguments advanced here suggest that Hamilton's Tory and Jacobitical connections and authorial activities are evidence of an intimate relationship in Handel's world between music and politics (in the sense of ideological sensibility and of current political affairs). Hamilton cannot persuasively contribute to

¹³⁸ Wood, *Romanticism and Music Culture in Britain, 1770–1840* (Cambridge, 2010), 50.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴⁰ See, for instance, Harris, *Handel as Orpheus*, especially 21; Aspden, 'Ariadne's Clew'.

a counter-argument that Handel or his works transcended politics simply because Handel had Tory as well as Whig supporters.¹⁴¹

Second and relatedly, scholarship on Handel's vocal works has played out larger debates about facts and interpretation. A number of scholars cite approvingly the literary historian Robert Hume's methodology, set out most fully in *Reconstructing Contexts*.¹⁴² It advocates 'finding, analysing, and honouring *fact*'.¹⁴³ Facts can be preferred to 'interpretation', because new facts help to reconstruct 'contexts'.¹⁴⁴ Contexts in turn provide 'extrinsic evidence with which to validate' understandings of individual texts (as, for example, intentionally political).¹⁴⁵ Some literary scholars have questioned Hume's articulation of his method, not least because it implies that some texts or traces of the past have a fact-like meaning, and can become background for explaining others.¹⁴⁶ Although this article has looked for new empirical data about Hamilton, it has tried to proceed on the understanding that facts are *fait* (made), and what makes them is part of the process of interpretation.¹⁴⁷ For this reason texts like *Changes* and *Doating Lovers* should be approached less as contexts for *Alexander's Feast* et al. than as intertexts with their own socio-cultural interests and puzzles.

The narratives we construct about Hamilton's authorial and social identities—the extent to which he changed his politics, became apolitical, or fit his writings and social self to his 'friends' without experiencing deep political affiliations—not to mention our understanding of *Changes*' significance for the libretti—will never become matter of fact. They will be a matter of unfolding interpretations in close contact with historical materials. In this respect, a dilemma familiar to scholars and critics is evoked by *Changes*' double narrative of absolute victory and absolute peril. New matters come to light, a revolution occurs, faction is vanquished, dissension silenced, multiplicity gives way to unity. Yet somehow 'Fiends' rise up again; spies and assassins threaten the new rulers; our materials prove 'harden'd in rebellious III'

¹⁴¹ See the use of Hamilton in, for example, Hunter, 'Handel among the Jacobites', 547–8.

¹⁴² Hume, *Reconstructing Contexts: The Aims and Principles of Archaeo-Historicism* (Oxford, 1999); McGeary, *Politics of Opera*, 5, 12; Smith, review of McGeary, 294–6; Andrews, *Historical Context*, 2.

¹⁴³ Hume, 193.

¹⁴⁴ Hume, 30–33.

¹⁴⁵ McGeary, 5, citing Hume, 'The Politics of Opera', 43.

¹⁴⁶ William Warner, 'Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century', *SEL* 40.3 (2000), 561–593 (562); Eric Rothstein, review in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 100.1 (2001), 110–114.

¹⁴⁷ As Georgina Born observes, there are 'distinct empiricism' and 'resilient tensions between them'. 'Towards a Relational Musicology', *JRMA* 135.2 (2010), 205–243 (215). On facts as made, see recently Bruno Latour, *The Modern Cult of the Factish Gods* (Durham, NC, 2010).

and must be ‘press[ed]’ ‘down’ at the close of each argument (520, 512). Future interpretive possibilities may change if *Changes* is brought into closer dialogue with Handel’s music. But—*plus ça change*—these changes will not stabilise or silence new interpretations.